

MEETING SUMMARY

MEETING: South Mountain Citizens Advisory Team Orientation

DATE: January 26, 2002 **TIME:** 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

LOCATION: Vee Quiva Casino

ATTENDANCE:

Lee Banning, Maricopa County Farm Bureau
Carlie Billen Back, SM/Laveen Chamber of Commerce
Chad Campbell, Sierra Club
Patrick Castellano, Twelve Oaks
Chuck Cunningham, Ahwatukee Foothills Chamber of Commerce
Chuck Crist, Lakewood HOA
Peggy Eastburn, Estrella Village Planning Committee
Michael Goodman, Phoenix Mountains Preservation Council

Angela Mazzi, Valley Forward
Nathaniel Percharo, Pecos Rd/I-10 Landowner Association
Laura Prendergast, Laveen Citizens for Responsible Development
Lucas Schlosser, Laveen Village Planning Committee
Barbara Schneider, South Mountain Village
James Slaker, Ahwatukee Foothills Village Planning Committee
Dave Williams, Knight Transportation

STAFF:

Dave Anderson, HDR
Brent Cain, Lima & Associates
Debra Duerr, HDR
Ralph Ellis, ADOT
John Godec, GRA

Theresa Gunn, GCI
Bill Hayden, ADOT
Michael Surface, Wilbur Smith
Steve Thomas, FHWA
Mary Viparina, ADOT

MEETING SUMMARY: Jennifer Graziano, GCI

DECISIONS:

- The group agreed to meet on the 4th Thursday of each month from 5:30-8:30 p.m. at the Vee Quiva Casino.

NEXT MEETING: Thursday, February 28, 2002.

ACTION PLAN:

Task/Activity	Who	By When
Schedule a traffic modeling presentation	GCI	Next meeting
Provided information on Route 85 construction update and traffic estimates	ADOT	
Invite Mark Schlappe, MAG to next CAP meeting	Bill Hayden	
Obtain and distribute general plans for the areas	GCI	Next meeting

HANDOUTS:

- SMCAT Binder
- 1987 Freeway System Map
- Progress Report on the Regional Freeway System
- Regional Freeway System July 2001 Certification Map

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Mary Viparina, ADOT, welcomed the members. Ms. Viparina stated that convening the CAT is a milestone. The project has been underway for about six months. She thanked the group for their participation. Each member also introduced themselves and the organizations that they represent.

- Laveen is expecting growth to reach 100,000 residents in the next 10 years.
- Lakewood HOA has 2,000 housing units and includes Desert Vista High School.

TRANSPORTATION 101

Bill Hayden, ADOT, gave an overview of transportation planning in the Valley.

- During the 1980's, Valley business leaders, Phoenix 40, identified social issues to be resolved to ensure future quality of life and to plan for growth.
- Original premise was a broad outer band of beltways with some east-west connections. It included 231 miles of expressway at grade with traffic signals which could be built quickly.
- Public agreed that we needed to address traffic concerns but did not want any expressways in their area.
- The 1985 half-cent sales tax proposal was a paradigm shift in how freeways were funded. The tax will sunset in 2005.
- Original estimate of cost was \$6 billion.
- Initial program didn't include interchanges and depressed sections. Also, right-of-way costs have skyrocketed. \$3-5,000/acre was the original right-of-way estimates.
- The Southwest Valley is the next major growth area.
- Maricopa County population is estimated to double in 20 years. The City of Phoenix estimates a population of 1 million in the Southwest Valley.
- In 1991, ADOT determined that there would not be enough money to complete the freeway system.
- In 1992, voters defeated both a new half-cent sales tax and a continuation of the existing half-cent tax.
- After the sales tax defeat, the private sector was asked to submit proposals for building the freeways.
- One private sector plan was to build South Mountain as a toll road, but after a year of study the offer was withdrawn.
- Paying for roads with tolls was not well received by the public.

- In 1999, the Arizona Legislature authorized a new financial package to generate more revenue through loans, grants and bonds.
- Governor Hull initiated a program to complete the freeway system by 2007, except for South Mountain, which is currently unfunded.
- Semi-annual audits are completed on the program and a progress report is distributed.
- We have several challenges to overcome.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

John Godec, GRA, gave an overview of the project. He reviewed the project area, process, EIS and project team.

- Maricopa County grew by 45 percent in the last decade.
- In 2000, the population was at 3.2 million.
- By 2040, unofficial projections suggest a population growth of almost 8 million.

SOUTH MOUNTAIN CITIZENS ADVISORY TEAM

Theresa Gunn, GCI, reviewed the member binder and operating policies.

- Some time was spent discussing the privacy issue. Some information and documents are meant for immediate public disclosure and can be shared. However, some of the information is meant for the CAT only and is not meant to be shared.
- Acceptance of the previous meeting minutes serves as a consensus point and becomes part of the official record. This will help keep the team focused and will help to eliminate old issues.

PURPOSE AND NEED 2025 HORIZON YEAR

Brent Cain, Lima & Associates, gave a presentation on the preliminary traffic modeling.

- Socioeconomic information drives the MAG traffic model.
- We are using adopted 2025 MAG population and employment because it is conservative.
- Have also reviewed Pinal County data for consistency.
- Reviewed the forecasted daily traffic volumes. Projected volume over capacity creates a level of service.
- The select link analysis shows there is not a lot of through traffic. Only 2-3 percent of travel is pass through traffic. Most is local traffic.
- The purpose of this information is to document whether or not we have a problem.

CAT Member Questions and Comments

- **Question:** Does it take into effect the Baseline expansion? **Answer:** Yes, all improvements in the MAG Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) are assumed to be complete.
- **Question:** How far into Level-of-Service (LOS) F are you? 0-3 minutes or 5-10 minutes? **Answer:** We will review in greater detail at a future meeting.

- **Comment:** A lot of trucks make a stop and then pass through.
- **Question:** Does it account for trucks using 51st Avenue bypass today? **Answer:** No.
- **Question:** If only two percent of vehicles on I-10 to Tucson are using a bypass, does it make sense to build a bypass? **Answer:** No.
- **Question:** Is this only a bypass or is it used as an alternative to the Broadway curve, which is the choke point?
- **Comment:** Bill Hayden stated that it is not ADOT's intent or objective to build a bypass or truck bypass. Our goal is to improve regional transportation in the Southwest Valley.
- **Question:** Does this include upgrading SR 85 to 4 lanes? **Answer:** MAG model does not include I-8 and SR 85.
- **Question:** Flying J and Giant do studies on truck traffic, have you talked to Swift about truck studies? **Answer:** Have requested the truck traffic modeling.
- **Question:** What about community traffic? What are their patterns? Where are they coming from and going to? How do we know it will solve congestion on Broadway? **Answer:** This more detailed information will be analyzed later in the process.
- **Question:** What is the reason for increased traffic north of the mountain?
- **Comment:** Shows that people are finding cut throughs in local neighborhood and the old alignment may not be in the right location.
- **Comment:** The Laveen traffic increase doesn't seem sensible based on what is planned.
- **Comment:** This information is to see if we have a need and present some tools that will help us analyze alternatives.
- **Comment:** Only 2 percent are using the bypass. 51st Avenue and Riggs Road are at capacity and bumper to bumper. Capacity on I-10 has dramatically increased.
- **Comment:** Road isn't needed for trips from CA to TX, but for people who live in the valley.
- **Comment:** Most people don't use Riggs Road and 51st Avenue because they are at capacity.

SCOPING ISSUES

Debra Duerr, HDR, reviewed some of the alternatives received during the scoping phase.

CAP Member Questions and Comments:

- **Comment:** This corridor is not going to fix the bottleneck problems but would help make the situation better.
- **Comment:** This is only one piece of the puzzle to make travel time reasonable.
- **Comment:** It is not a magic bullet.
- **Comment:** Unless major employers come to the west side then people won't commute across the valley.

IDENTIFY AND DISCUSS ISSUES/CONCERNS

The CAP members were asked to write down their issues and concerns. The following is their list.

- Schools representation, John's handouts, public communication, website and rumor control.
- Transit oriented development 101?
- MCDOT has \$85,000,000 that was supposed to go to the truck route. Where is it? Will it apply here?
- East-west lateral seems to be a problem, especially I-10 from west valley to downtown. Need another east-west to downtown.
- Air Quality 101.
- Resources. Do we have the resources available for the projected growth (i.e. electricity, water, waste management, etc.)?
- Red dot map handouts.
- School district representation.
- Local impacts of air quality.
- You stress we don't build truck bypasses, but no other area of Phoenix services the trucking industry like ours.
- Some background information on Vision 21 Task Force findings.
- Consider major employers and employment centers. These drive rush hour flows.
- Major employers of Arizona: State, City of Phoenix. They need to decentralize.
- Environmental. What is the "Brown Cloud" effect of doing what this team is doing? Building more freeways.
- Are the valley freeway projects still in jeopardy due to the legal battle over children's education issue? Yes.
- Rumor control.
- Presentation/Information on predicted types of growth in Laveen, Ahwatukee, any other affected area.
- Soft copy of charts on website. Password access.
- How will ADOT's "outer loop" (w-Palo Verde, n-Camp Verde?, e-Gold Canyon, s-Casa Grande) play into traffic flow modeling for 2025?
- Why does this process take so long?
- Proposed light rail plan for the future. Map.
- City of Phoenix did (a traffic) study. South Mountain Freeway had no effect on level of service of Chandler and Ray. Need update for AFVPC.
- If LOS F, need to know delay in seconds.
- Hard copies of the slides should be made available to the CAT.
- Land use and transportation are integrated issues. How can our group work to study them in tandem?
- Can "congestion" ever be solved? Studies have shown that the level of congestion increases with the level of roadway expansion. Therefore, shouldn't an emphasis be placed on alternative modes of transportation?
- Alignment location vs. projected volume. C.B.R. comparisons.
- Options. What are they? Review criteria. Priorities.